

### One-Year Compliance Report for Texas Gulf Educator Certification Program Alternative Certification Program April 7, 2010

The Texas Education Agency administers Texas Administrative Code rules required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all educator preparation programs in the state. Please see the complete Texas Administrative Code rules at <a href="https://www.tea.state.tx.us">www.tea.state.tx.us</a> for details contained in each rule.

A one-year post-approval visit of the Gulf Educator Certification Program alternative certification program was conducted on April 7, 2010 by Texas Education Agency (TEA) program specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Dr. Phillip Eaglin in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10 (c).

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code rules governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. TEA sent electronic surveys to all interns, faculty, advisory committee members, program staff members, field supervisors, mentors, and campus principals connected with the Gulf Educator Certification Program. A total of 66 surveys were returned: 34 from interns; 9 from advisory committee members; 2 from faculty; 1 from program staff; 2 from field supervisors; 10 mentors; and 8 from campus principals. In addition a review of documents, syllabi, and a curriculum correlation chart provided evidence regarding compliance. A self-report was submitted to TEA by the Gulf Educator Certification Program on March 8, 2010. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence.

# COMPONENT I: GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS-- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20

### Findings:

The Gulf Educator Certification Program (GECP) is in compliance with TAC §228.20 regarding governance or advisory committees for educator preparation programs. Sign-in sheets from meetings, the self-report, and electronic surveys returned to TEA by advisory committee (AC) members indicate that the AC has representatives from Harmony charter schools and various school districts, community, institutes of higher education, and the program. Advisory committee minutes and agendas show that the group meets twice or more per year to

discuss elements of design, delivery and evaluation of the program. Agendas reflect meetings on January 10, 2009, September 26, 2009, and March 28, 2010. Eight AC members attended the Opening Session of the monitoring visit, including the Executive Director of the Texas Gulf Foundation, Dr. Alp Aslondagon. Texas Gulf Foundation sponsors educational efforts in Texas, including the Harmony schools and the Gulf Educator Certification Program.

The GECP advisory committee supports the teacher preparation program in terms of facilities and planning. This is especially important in light of the opening of seven new Harmony charter schools this past year, all needing certified teachers. The umbrella organizations, Cosmos Foundation and Texas Gulf Foundation, are collaborating with GECP and Harmony schools to build a new university in Houston. North American University plans to open in September, 2010. These organizations work cohesively together to create an interlocking educational system, serving grades K-20, for the Houston area.

Based on the evidence presented above, Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §228.20.

## **COMPONENT II. ADMISSION CRITERIA** - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10

#### Findings:

The Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §227.10 concerning admissions requirements. A review of student folders, returned surveys and the self-report revealed that the program uses the state mandated entrance requirements for teacher certification as the basis for admission. No candidates have been admitted with less than a 2.5 GPA. A passing score on the Pre-Admission Content Test (test) is also required. At this time, GECP only offers certification in Math4-8 and Science 4-8, to help fill critical shortage areas. Student folders revealed that many candidates have graduate degrees, such as in engineering or dentistry, and that most candidates' undergraduate degrees are from universities in Turkey or elsewhere. All foreign transcripts are reviewed by another office sponsored by the Texas Gulf Foundation and approved by TEA to review foreign transcripts. This service is especially helpful in the Houston area where many such candidates currently live.

Candidate applications to the program contain written responses, and nonnative English speakers are required to score at least 575 on the paper version of the TOEFL, and 55 on the Test of Spoken English.

Based on the evidence presented above, Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §227.10.

### **COMPONENT III. EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM -- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30**

#### Findings:

The Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §228.30 concerning required curriculum for educator preparation. According to the self-report, faculty and intern surveys, the website and a chart titled *Essential Components for Educator Preparation Curriculum in Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities TAC* §228.30 submitted by GECP to TEA, instruction for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) consists of 305 clock hours, including 50 clock hours credit for professional development from the interns' schools. Curriculum is delivered face-to-face, with online components. PPR curriculum content is aligned with the PPR EC-12 standards and covers all topics mandated in TAC §228.30. Program specialists reviewed the PPR online components. Instructions were clear, readings were either included online or from selected textbooks, and activities enhanced depth and substance of learning for each topic.

GECP also provides specific training in Math 4-8 and Science 4-8, beyond the TEXES. While TEKS numbers were not listed on each syllabus, it was clear from syllabus topics that content specific TEKS were being covered in those classes. Assignments and assessments were online for each of these subject areas. Grading for all assignments and assessments is on a pass/fail basis. If any assignment or module is not completed, or failed, it must be made up before going forward.

Based on the evidence presented above, the Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC§ 228.30.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT — PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING -- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35

### Findings:

According to the program hours chart submitted to TEA, GECP offers 305 clock hours of coursework and training, including 50 clock hours credit for professional development from the interns' schools. Documentation of Continuing Professional Education hours was reviewed in student folders. Thirty clock hours of field-based experience is required for candidates prior to beginning the internship. Six hours of test preparation are provided.

Mentors for interns are all certified teachers. Mentors are trained by GECP, as evidenced by a training agenda, a mentor agreement, and a mentor handbook. Field Supervisors are also trained by the program. Field supervisors are experienced educators with Texas certification who conduct two formal observations of interns during the first semester and at least one during the second semester of internship. The program provides field supervisors with a handbook and has signed agreements with them. Observation forms in student folders revealed that the first contact is made within the first three weeks of internship and the first formal observation within the first six weeks. Written feedback is provided to the candidate and campus administrator several times during the year. There is a mid-year and end-year report of the intern's progress, as well as feedback after each observation.

Based on the evidence presented above, the Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §228.35.

COMPONENT V. PROGRAM EVALUATION - ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.-- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 -

#### Findings:

The Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §228.40 concerning assessment of candidates and overall program. Incoming candidates must pass the PACT prior to admission, and demonstrate English language proficiency. Each course module is a benchmark of progress since any incomplete or failed module must be made up before the candidate can move forward. Students receive timely feedback concerning online assignments and assessments from the instructor so that they do not get behind.

Student satisfaction surveys, course evaluations, and feedback from mentors, field supervisors and campus administrators are available for program evaluation. Since the program is new, no ASEP data has yet been compiled.

Student records are maintained in a locked, fire-proof cabinet, and will be kept for a minimum of five years.

According to the self-report, advisory committee surveys and advisory committee minutes and agendas, the program will be evaluated by the advisory committee and others once a year using TExES scores, intern surveys and intern retention and rehire statistics. Curriculum will be kept up to date and revised according to new rules from TEA.

Based on the evidence presented above, the Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with TAC §228.40.

### **PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency continuing approval visit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only. Failure to comply with TAC rules governing educator preparation programs may result in action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) per TAC §229 beginning in 2010.

**PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:** None. The Gulf Educator Certification Program is in compliance with all Texas Administrative Code rules at this time.

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: None.**